

General Conference Bulletin, vol. 4

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1901

April 4, 1901

Church Organization

ATJ

A. T. Jones

(7 P.M., April 2, 1901.)

The fourth chapter of Ephesians, beginning with the seventh verse: "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the grace of Christ." *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.1*

The word was given to us to day that God calls for a reorganization of the General Conference, its work, its processes. That, consequently, must be our chief study. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.2*

The General Conference is now formally, by representation in session; but this representation that is here is not all that there is of the General Conference. We do not find all of the General Conference, till we have included every Seventh-day Adventist in the world. Consequently a reorganization of the General Conference calls for a reorganization of each individual Seventh-day Adventist throughout the world. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.3*

This is called for not only on the part, and in behalf, of the General Conference itself within itself, but it is called for by the interests of God in the earth. The world has reached that time in which a work is to be done by the Lord, which work He can not do unless each one of us shall be reorganized, renewed. Therefore I have begun with this verse; and we shall follow on through a number of verses of this same chapter; for this is the story of reorganization. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.4*

Life, the Source of Organization

All organization that is not of God is a mere makeshift for the time being. There is no true organization but that which is of God. And it is only life that is the source of organization. Organization is not the source of life. Life produces organization. Therefore, for God to have a reorganization of only the General Conference that is in session here, demands that God's life shall reach us anew and in fuller measure than ever yet it has. And whomsoever it is that God shall reach by that life of His, that is organization; and whomsoever He shall reach by that life of His in greater measure, that is reorganization. Therefore I have read this verse; for this is the beginning of life. All true organization comes from God to men by the grace of God, which is the gift of God Himself to men.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.5*

So then "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Then, since the grace of God is the fountain of all good to men, and that grace is given unto every one of us according to the measure of Christ, it follows that there is the supply, there is the source, the fountain of abundance of grace to accomplish that for which God calls today.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.6*

What is the measure of the gift of Christ?—"In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Unto every one of us, then, is given grace according to that measure of all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And He gave Himself—not loaned Himself, but gave, gave, in an eternal gift, Himself—to us.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.7*

That is the measure of the gift of Christ. There is no limit to it. It is boundless as the fullness of God; and is given to every one of us—US! to you, to me. O, then, when God opens (I will not say the fountain) the boundless sea of His grace to you and to me individually, and then says to us that God calls for a reorganization, what shall hinder? Is not the prospect bright enough for us to throw ourselves away upon His offer,—to plunge off into that boundless sea of His grace, which works only salvation to every one whom it reaches? O,—*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.8*

“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.9*

Like the wideness of the sea;*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.10*

There’s a kindness in his justice*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.11*

That is more than liberty.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.12*

So much for the gift; so much for the inducement, the qualification, which He gives to every one of us to accomplish upon us, to accomplish in us, and to accomplish for us; and then, having accomplished upon us and in us and for us, to accomplish through us; His wondrous purpose in this day, to glorify God upon the earth, and to finish the work which is given us to do.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.13*

Object of the Gift of Grace

ATJ

Now let us see what He proposes to do by that grace which He has given boundlessly to every one of us.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.14*

First of all this grace is given “for the perfecting of the saints;” and anything else for which this grace is given can never be accomplished, unless this first purpose for which it is given shall be recognized, looked unto, and aimed at,—the perfection of the saints.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.15*

The next clause is, “For the work of the ministry;” and the next, “For the edifying [the building up] of the body of Christ.” But what can God do with a ministry that does not recognize the perfecting of the saints? What can God do in building up His church, when God’s grace in the perfecting of the saints who compose the church, is not recognized?*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.16*

So then He has rightly laid the foundation; rightly, He has put the first truth first. The perfecting of the saints, then is the first work of

the grace of God. And since He has given all the grace that He has, and has given all the fullness of God in the gift of grace—all that God is, all His power, all His sanctifying holiness and Spirit—all this is given, pledged, to him who receives the grace, that that grace shall accomplish God's purpose in bringing him unto perfection.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.17*

Then no one who has named the name of Christ, no one who professes to have received the grace of God, is ever to be content for one moment with anything short of perfection as God sees it—as He has set it before our eyes in Jesus Christ. And it is He who is to do it; not we to perfect ourselves, not we to do the work, but He who gave Himself that He might do it. There is the foundation of our confidence! there is fixed the foundation of our trust,—that it is He who is to accomplish it; and then we know that it shall certainly be done.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.18*

The Gospel Ministry

ATJ

The next thing for which this boundless gift of the grace of God is given, is “the work of the ministry.” The ministry of the gospel is the highest calling, and to be a minister of the gospel is to hold the highest position in the wide universe. That is the truth. I mean the highest among creatures, of course.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.19*

I say it again: the ministry of the gospel is the highest calling; to be a minister of the gospel is to occupy the highest place, and to hold the highest position, that there is to be held or occupied in the universe of God.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.20*

Therefore, I exhort every soul who has ever thought of the ministry, not to allow himself to entertain any thought of the ministry of the gospel that is any lower than that which I have named. For anyone to allow himself to think of the ministry of the gospel of Christ in any lower degree, to any possibly conceivable extent, is to miss the true ministry of the gospel. Any man who holds the ministry of the gospel at any lower standard, in any degree, than that which I have

named, has missed the true idea of the gospel ministry. Then may the Lord by His Spirit and by the abundance of His grace work upon our minds and our hearts, to broaden our comprehension, and lift us to that height at which He Himself has placed the standard of the ministry of the gospel of Christ.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.21*

Think, for a moment, of what it is to be a minister of the gospel! What is the gospel?*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.22*

It is the power of God.*Romans 1:16*. Then the ministry of the gospel is the ministry of the power of God. You and I, brethren, are commissioned of God to go and minister to men the power of God. The power of God is to be ministered unto men by us in such a way that it shall work their salvation.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.23*

But wherein lies the power of God which the gospel is? Why is it that the gospel is the power of God? The next verse tells (*Romans 1:17*). “For therein”—therein—“is the righteousness of God revealed.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.24*

The righteousness of God is the very essence of His character; and that is the source of the power of the gospel. The gospel is the power of God, because therein—in the gospel—is the righteousness of God. The ministry of the gospel is the ministry of the character of God. To you and me, as ministers of the gospel, God has given by His grace that commission to preach the gospel, to preach the power of God, to preach the very essence of the character of God, unto men; so that they shall find the essence of the character of God; and in that find the salvation which God works in the lives of men, in human flesh.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.25*

And how shall you, how shall I, how shall we, minister the power of God unless we ourselves have the power of God? How shall we minister the power of God unless God shall so clothe us with the power of God that the words of the gospel which we speak shall reach the hearts of men in such a way that they shall know that God is speaking to their hearts; that they shall recognize that God is present, and that they shall answer to God for what they shall do in response to the word that He has given them? But God does just so

clothe those whom He sends: “He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” *Isaiah 61:10.GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.26*

And in the way of righteousness is life—the life of God. Is it not true that He has said that in former times we, as Gentiles, were alienated, separated from the life of God? But in Christ we are joined to the life of God: and that is eternal life. And so it is written, in *John 5:24*: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hearth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life.” Hath it—not shall have it, but hath it. As to the future it is: “Shall not come into condemnation.” But as to the present—“but is passed from death unto life.” Thus the believer in Jesus is joined to the life of God, even as it is written, “With Thee is the fountain of life.” Then this life of God becomes our life. And there is the revealing of his power: for Jesus Christ is made an High Priest, “after the power of an endless life.” And He has made us “a royal priesthood,” with that same power of an endless life; for nothing short of the power of an endless life can ever make anybody a priest and minister of God, in the gospel of God. “Ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God.” *Isaiah 61:6.GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.27*

The gospel is the power of God, because that in it the righteousness of God is revealed, and “in the way of righteousness is life.” And there is the hiding of his power, the endless power of an endless life. And this endless life of God that comes in the boundless righteousness of God, is revealed in the gospel which He has given to us to preach. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.28*

The True Christian Life

ATJ

Another word about that life. That life of God is in Jesus Christ. He is the source of life. Brethren, there is a higher conception for us than to think that we as Christians get our life through the breath which we breathe here, as all men breathe; and the food which we eat, as all men eat. We had all that before we were Christians at all. We would have had all that if we had never been Christians. But

when God calls us to Him, to become connected with the life of God, we are lifted above the place we were before, and are joined to that boundless sea of the life of God. And there is the source of our life as Christians. God proposes so to connect us with Himself that we shall be conscious day by day; and all the time, that there is an inflowing of life from the throne of the living God to the heart and life of the believer in Jesus. And when we have allowed ourselves to be lifted up to that place, and to receive that flow of the life of God into our lives day by day,—O, then the power of God will be upon us! Then the power of God will be manifested in our ministry, even the endless power that belongs to the endless life of God. That is the truth.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.29*

There is just as much reality—in degree there is more, of course, because it is more substantial; but in the matter of fact—in the matter of tangibility, there is just as much reality in finding the life of God flowing to our lives day by day, when we believe in Jesus, as there ever was in finding life flow to us day by day by our breathing when we first lived in the world. That is the divine fact. That is the true higher life. That is the true Christian life. The life that flows to us from Jesus Christ, we get from heaven day by day, by faith, as constantly as we breathe; so that faith is the breath of the spiritual life as really as the air is the breath of the natural life. We breathe it in from Jesus Christ direct, the Life-giver. That is the Christian life.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.30*

Ministers of an Endless Life

ATJ

But why is that given to us?—O, for the work of the ministry. But to whom do we minister?—To mankind. What do we minister?—O, Jesus Christ has thus brought us to the Fountain of life, and connected us therewith, that we may be indeed those who shall stand between the living and the dead, to convey to the dead the life that shall cause them to live. That is what we are in the world for. It is that Jesus Christ, the living, may, by us, reach the dead with the life that measures with the life of God.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.31*

Thus we are ministers of life. We are called, correctly, truly, ministers of Christ. But what is Christ?—He is “our life,” and “the Author of life.” *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.32*

Let us read that beautiful passage in First John: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.” And that shall be all true of you and me today. True, John spoke of the time when they looked upon Him in the flesh; but John did not stop with that. John looked upon Jesus Christ in the Spirit after He had left the flesh and gone to heaven. And it belongs to you and me today to look upon Jesus Christ, to behold Him with our eyes as He is today at the right hand of God, to give repentance, remission of sins, to shed forth life to the dead. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.33*

“Which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.34*

Who is He?—The life. When we are ministers of Christ, we are only the ministers of that endless life, “that eternal life.” Oh, then, how can I be a minister of the life of Christ, a minister of the life of God, when my ministry is as continuous as my life, unless I am connected with that fountain of life, so that that eternal life is my life? Only thus can I become a minister of life; and this is life eternal, you all know, “that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” Do “you see your calling, brethren”? We are ministers of Christ, and in that are ministers of eternal life to the dead. What a calling! and what a height there is to the calling! *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.35*

Brethren, let us ask God to lift us up to the height of it; and there let us dwell. There let us remain, never asking to come down. There at that height let us abide, looking into His face, drawing from Him the life, the light, the glory, that perfects saints, and makes efficient the

ministry of the gospel.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.36*

That is the great thing. Each of those steps we must take, or the next one can not follow. Then I beg again, I pray again, that the Lord, in the abundance of His grace, may so impress it upon each soul, that we have not found our true attitude in the Christian life until we know that there is flowing constantly to us from the throne, the stream of life that shall cause us truly to live; and shall make us the channel of life to the dead.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.37*

“For the building up of the body of Christ,” the church of God. First, the perfecting of the saints; then the work of the ministry; then the building up of the church. The church needs building up! That is why God calls for reorganization. Then let us recognize that He has set before us that true standard,—nothing short of the perfecting and the perfection of the saints, then the true height of the ministry of the gospel, the ministry of Christ.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.38*

Ministry Embraces All

ATJ

Now just a word or two before I leave that finally,—that this ministry takes in all: “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” Whosoever has received the grace of God has received in that the gift of the ministry of that grace, the ministry of Christ, the ministry of the gospel.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.39*

The fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians states that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and that He hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Whosoever finds reconciliation, the reconciliation of God in Christ, in that finds the ministry of that same reconciliation to those who have not found it. So the ministry, this ministry, is universal. But, brethren, unless we who are called to the preaching ministry, appreciate what that ministry is, how can those to whom we preach ever appreciate it?*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.40*

And this is all given, “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man.” A perfect man. How many of us?—Till we all. Put the two together. Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, till we all come to perfect men. Thank the Lord! “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.41*

Next, the blessed reward that comes upon that: “That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” Brethren, God has that for us that shall make us stable. God has that for us that shall make us, in the truth, —in righteousness, and in the principles of righteousness,—as firm as the Rock of Ages Himself. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.42*

Organization From the Head

ATJ

More. Read in that verse again and the next one with it (*Ephesians 4:14, 15*): “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.” *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.43*

Here is true reorganization, and there is no other: “Speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.44*

There, is reorganization; and there is no other way. Any organization that does not come from Jesus Christ is not organization at all: it is only machinery. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901,*

Note that this organization—this reorganization comes from the HEAD. Organization does not come from the members; it comes from the Head. Let me read that again now, and I will read another verse with it. “Speaking the truth in love,”—this body of Christ,—“speaking the truth in love,—these members,—“may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ;” from whom?—from Christ—“the whole body”—that is, all the members. “The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part,”—this from the Head,—“maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Then do you not see that only this is organization in the church of Christ? All reorganization must come from Christ Himself, through the Spirit of God. He can do it; and only He can.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.46*

Turn also to Colossians, to the corresponding verse to which I call your attention in connection with this (*Colossians 2:18, 19*): “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the HEAD, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.47*

This says, then, that this body is built from the Head; and that those who do not hold the Head are beguiled of their reward. They humble themselves, they work, they pray, and all that; but what does it amount to? It is all simply works. And all this simply because the Head is not recognized, “Not holding the Head.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.48*

So then the body is organized from the Head. The life energy, flowing by the Spirit of God from the Head to all the members,—each member actuated from the Head, each member guided by the will that resides in the Head—that is perfection of organization.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.49*

The human body is the same; and that is the illustration which the Scripture uses for this very thing. Here is the human body—many

members, but it is all one body. Each member of this body of ours which God has given us, is actuated and guided only by the head.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.50*

By the way, let me pause upon that one thought. In our bodies, which we have ever with us, and to which we were directed today,—why is it that in all this exhortation of the Spirit of Prophecy to reorganization, health reform comes in every time? Why is it, as today it was clearly cited, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made”?—It is because that in this organization in which we ourselves are, our bodies which God has made us, He has presented before us an everlasting illustration of the organization of the church. And it is exceeding carelessness, and from that, blindness, that can not see the organization of the church,—what it must be,—when every day each one carries about with him, and is constantly using, this body, which is composed of many members. Every one of these members is actuated by the head, and no two of them ever come into quarrel, ever have any difference of opinion, or act in contrary ways.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.51*

You simply can not have schism in the body which God has organized from the Head. Therefore, since God calls for reorganization, let not any soul be afraid that there is going to be confusion, or schism, or anything of the kind. There is no danger whatever—except among those who hold not the Head.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.52*

Who compose the church?—Those who look to the Head; those who seek the Head; those who are joined to the Head. It is no difference how many members there may be, though we are only one on one side of the earth, and another on the other side of the earth, we two members will move together, and act together; because the Head, Christ Jesus, the Lord, is organizing both, His will actuates both, He is the One who is working in both.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.53*

“Look Ye Out Men.”

ATJ

Then we come to this: There must be reorganization. God calls for it. In this reorganization now, God calls for an additional thing to what He called for before, and that is a change of men. Those other men whom God calls for, and whom God will call—let me say that again, whom God will call,—these must come from this company. They must come from ourselves, must come from the church of God somewhere. Then that throws upon you and me, upon each soul of us, the Heaven-sent responsibility that each one of us shall be reorganized from heaven by the direct power and agency of the Head.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.54*

These coming men must be chosen to places. The Scripture says, has said it all the time, “Look ye out men.” In the looking out of these men, what are we to look for? How are we to look, and how are we to proceed to know the proper man to fill a certain place? We must ask God to open our eyes, and anoint our eyes with the heavenly eyesalve that we may see the men whom God has already called. That is the true way of “looking out men.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.55*

Nothing short of that can be the looking out of men. There must be men looked out from among us. God has them. He has prepared them. They are already prepared. He has told us so. Then what we are to do is to ask that our eyes shall be opened, that God shall anoint them with the heavenly eyesalve, so that we shall be able to see and know that there is the man whom God has called to that place, to that work.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.56*

It can be so. God does not do things in a corner, or under cover, but openly before the eyes of all. All whose eyes God shall anoint and open shall be able to see.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.57*

Position Gives no Authority

ATJ

This also must be considered: that position, place, never gives authority. Authority qualifies for place—when God calls the man to a place.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.58*

I will say it again; it must be a watchword for everyone in this Conference. Position never gives authority. Whomsoever God has called to be the president of the General Conference the next term—when he shall have been chosen, and shall stand before us here elected—will have no more authority than he has right now: and we do not yet know who he is.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.59*

Place, position, never bestows authority. No authority is derived from place. But authority that a man already has from God, which God has put upon him, will qualify a man for the place to which God calls him; and if he has not that authority before he enters the place, he has not the authority when he is in the place. The view that place gives authority is precisely the principle of papal infallibility. The pope is not infallible before he is elected. Nobody claims that. He is only a cardinal before he is elected; but as soon as he is elected, then he is infallible; then he is inspired by the Holy Ghost, because he holds his place. That is the papacy.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.60*

Christianity is that God clothes men with authority: and whether they have any place or position, or not, they have authority. Look at it: Jesus Christ was in this world, truly saying, “All power [and that is “all authority” in the Revised Version] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. And He had no place at all. He had no position at all. The Pharisees, the priests, the scribes, the lawyers, the hypocrites, had position; they had place; and they could lord it over Him, and summon Him before them, and sit in judgment upon Him. But where was their authority?—They had none: and so He told the people: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do,”—because, as they sat in Moses’ seat, they read the words that Moses had written. All right; that is the word of God; but “do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.61*

With Moses in the seat, there was authority from the seat; but with a scribe and a Pharisee in the seat, in the place of Moses, there was no authority except from God in the word which the man happened to read, and which, because of his hypocrisy, was altogether independent of him and apart from him.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901,*

But it is said of Jesus: They all “wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.” And why?—O, “He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Precisely. All that the scribes could speak was borrowed, and everybody could know that it was borrowed; for it was alone, so far as any connection that they had with it was concerned. But when Jesus Christ spoke the same words that the Pharisees and scribes had said, everybody knew that what He said was not borrowed, but was substance; that it was of Himself: that that word lived in Him; that He Himself was but the expression of the word which He spoke; and when the word was spoken, it was with weight that impressively struck the ears, and rested upon the hearts of those who heard. It rested upon the hearts of those men with comfort, and brought them joy. And that is the grace with which God wishes to clothe ever one in this whole assembly and throughout the world.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.63*

Thus Jesus Christ had the authority. And the people knew it. And the Pharisees who did not have authority, grew so jealous of Him that they could not bear Him any longer. All the world has gone after Him, and so they must put Him out of the world to “save our place. If we do not we shall lose our place. If we let Him thus alone the Romans will take away both our place and nation.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.64*

But the man who is connected with the Head, the man who serves God, the man who lives in Jesus Christ, can never lose his place; for his place is with Jesus Christ under the wings of the Almighty, and he is safe.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.65*

The True Source of Authority

ATJ

But where was Jesus' authority, when He did not have any position or any place? How could He have authority?—Ah! it was where true authority always lies in the truth which He preached from God. All true and right authority of any man in the church comes to him only

through the truth of God which he receives. When we shall find a man in this world who has as much of the truth of God as had Christ, we shall have found a man who has all authority in heaven and earth, because he has all the truth in heaven and earth. The measure of truth that a man has, is the only measure of authority that he has wherever he is. And if he is in the highest place of responsibility on this earth, and that is the presidency of the General Conference, if he has no truth, he has no authority. All the authority he can ever have in that place is simply from the truth that is in him, and which is a part of him. Therefore Jesus said: "The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you." What do the princes of the world do?—They exercise authority.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.66*

God has never given to any man in His church authority to exercise authority. That is the difference between the princes of the world and the princes of God; for we are princes of God. The princes of this world in places of authority, but without true authority, exercise authority. The princes of God having true authority, never exercise authority; being the authority of the truth of God, it exercises itself.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.67*

Therefore, there is no such thing as dominion among the princes of God. There is no lordship. There is none of that kingly spirit which was described to us. There are no territorial boundaries among the princes of God,—that this is my Conference. It is God's Conference. It is not my territory. It is God's. The princes of this world who have no real authority, are they who exercise authority. The princes of God have true authority, but exercise no authority. The princes of God have authority, and that is enough to satisfy them, and God takes care of the rest, so that no one is greatest; but only one is Master, and all of us are brethren.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.68*

Then, let us see that we be organized from the Head. Let us see that our authority shall come from God; and that we never exercise authority. Yet speak with all authority, because the authority is in the truth which we speak. Only there lies our authority. Let us now read again the passage that we have studied: "But unto every one

of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.... And He gave some apostles and some prophets, some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.69*

Remember that we were called today to put away childish things, to be no more children, tossed to and fro, not knowing where we are, not knowing whether we are on solid ground. God wants us to build upon the foundation, the truth, which makes men free, and which we know is the truth. Then will not we fear though the earth be moved out of her place, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.70*

What man, what set of men, can select a worker here and another there, and fitly join them together? Well has it been expressed that this work of conducting the cause of God is the most delicate in the universe, because it deals with minds. How can we fitly join together living souls in spirit, with the life of God? Only God can do that. Only Christ, the Head, can do that. He will use us in joining us together, knitting,—not weaving, but knitting—us together. In weaving, the threads are held side by side, and across, that they shall hold; but in knitting it is only one thread, in and in, in and in, each stitch holding to all the others. That is what God proposes to do with us. We are joined—knitted—together, and compacted by that which every joint supplies, so making increase of the body the church, unto the building up of itself in love: building up itself from the Head.*GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.71*

That is organization. That is reorganization. Come, brethren, let us be organized; let us be reorganized. *GCB/GCDB April 4, 1901, page 1.72*

